some supplementary information. In the negotiations and in the framework of WTO, and the discussions with the WTO officials, where do the negative aggregate measurement of support to India figure? As is known, in America, Europe and Japan, the farmers are heavily subsidised. On the other hand, it is on record that at least till 1996-97, the Indian farmers were subsidised in negative manner; in the sense that the farmers got a price which was much lower than the price they would have got in a free market. I would like to know whether this aspect figured in the negotiations in the framework of WTO and discussions with the WTO officials.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Revival of tea plantations in Himachal Pradesh

†*84. SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tea Board is taking steps to revive the old tea plantations in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) the area of land covered under the old tea plantations in the State;

(c) whether the Tea Board is considering to give a package to the State to save the Kangra tea industry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total area of land covered under old existing tea plantations in Himachal Pradesh is approximately 2294 hectares. This does not include approximately 2000 hectares of erstwhile tea areas.

(c) and (d) The Tea Board has no separate package for the Kangra area. However, Tea Board has allowed, as a special case, reclamation of the earlier abandoned tea areas in Himachal Pradesh for subsidy for rejuvenation and replacement planting. A specific certificate from the Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBTVPalampur

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Agriculture University about the suitability for reclamation is necessary to claim this benefit. This scheme is an extension of the existing plan scheme for tea plantation development activities. In addition, the Tea Board provides assistance through various schemes, as follows:—

(1) Several incentives are given to small tea growers for setting up of self help groups, organizing study tours for visiting other tea growing regions of the country, raising of nurseries for supply of good quality planting materials etc.

(2) Grant-in-aid is provided for extending advisory services and organizing training programmes on modern aspects of tea cultivation.

(3) The Board had also provided assistance in the past for setting up of four co-operative factories in the State.

(4) In order to ensure a reasonable return for the green leaf produced by the small tea growers, a price sharing formula between small tea growers and manufacturers of made tea is being implemented with effect from 1st April 2004.

(5) A price subsidy scheme for small tea growers has been announced for a four month period from February to May 2004, under which a maximum subsidy of Rs. 8 per kg. for made tea (which would amount to approximately Rs. 2 per kg for green leaf) would be paid to the small tea growers having holding upto 10.12 hectares.

Foreign investment in education

†*85. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to allow the foreign capital investment in the field of education;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard and the areas in the field of education decided to be given priority for the purpose; and

(c) the percentage of foreign capital investment which has been decided to be allowed in each field of education?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.